UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.198/1993/L.1
24 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
Fifteenth session
10-28 May 1993

DRAFT REPORT

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 8	2
II.	ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS	9 - 18	4
	A. Opening of the session	9	4
	B. Appointment of new members	10	4
	C. Election of officers	11	4
	D. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work	12 - 13	4
	E. Observers	14 - 16	6
	F. Other matters	17 - 18	6
III.	GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS	19 - 84	6

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly decided to maintain the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, established under Assembly resolution 33/115 C of 18 December 1978, which would be known as the Committee on Information, and to increase its membership from 41 to 66. In its resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979, the Assembly requested the Committee on Information:

> "(a) To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;
>
> "(b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications;
>
> "(c) To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly;"

and requested the Committee on Information and the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

2. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly, in resolution 35/201 of 16 December 1980, expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and the recommendations of its Ad Hoc Working Group, 1/ reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in Assembly resolution 34/182, and decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 66 to 67. The Committee on Information agreed, at its organizational session in 1980, that the principle of geographical rotation would be applied to all the officers of the Committee and that they should be elected for two-year terms of office.

3. At its thirty-sixth to forty-fifth sessions, the General Assembly again expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the reports of the Committee 2/ and its recommendations, and reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 34/182 (General Assembly resolutions 36/149 B, 37/94 B, 38/82 B, 39/98 A, 40/164 A, 41/68 A, 42/162, 43/60, 44/50 and 45/76). At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly took note of the Report of the Committee on Information and adopted its consensus recommendations as contained in General Assembly resolutions 46/73 A and B of 11 December 1991. The General Assembly further requested the Committee to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

4. At its thirty-ninth session, the General Assembly appointed two new members of the Committee, namely China and Mexico; at its forty-first session the Assembly appointed Malta as a new member of the Committee; at its forty-third

session, Hungary, Ireland and Zimbabwe were appointed; and at its forty-fourth session, the Assembly appointed Nepal as a new member.

5. At its forty-fifth session, the Assembly decided, on the recommendation of the Committee on Information, to increase the membership of the Committee from 74 to 78 members, and appointed Czechoslovakia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica and Uruguay as members of the Committee. The General Assembly also decided on the appointment of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic as a member of the Committee on Information, with immediate effect, to fill the vacancy left by the German Democratic Republic.

6. At its forty-sixth session, the Assembly decided, on the recommendation of the Committee on Information, to increase the membership of the Committee from 78 to 79 members and appointed Burkina Faso as a member of the Committee.

7. At its forty-seventh session, the Assembly decided on the recommendation of the Committee on Information, to increase the membership of the Committee from 79 to 81 and appointed the Republic of Korea and Senegal as members of the Committee.

8. The Committee is composed of the following Member States:

Algeria
Argentina
Bangladesh
Belarus
Belgium
Benin
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Chile
China
Colombia
Congo
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Cuba
Cyprus
Denmark
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Ireland
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Lebanon
Malta
Mexico
Mongolia
Morocco
Nepal
Netherlands
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Senegal
Singapore
Slovakia
Somalia
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Syrian Arab Republic
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Yemen
Yugoslavia
Zaire
Zimbabwe

II. ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS

A. Opening of the session

9. The organizational meeting of the fifteenth session of the Committee was convened at United Nations Headquarters on 10 May 1993. In the absence of the outgoing Chairman, the session was opened by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information on behalf of the Secretary-General. After the election of the Bureau, the Chairman and the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information made statements (see annexes I and II to the present report).

B. Appointment of new members

10. The Committee welcomed the representatives of the Republic of Korea and Senegal as new members.

C. Election of officers

11. In accordance with the principle of geographic rotation, the Committee elected the following officers for the period 1993-1994, as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Mansoor Suhail (Pakistan)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Alejandro H. Nieto (Argentina)
Mr. Philemon K. Chokwe (Kenya)
Mr. Stanislaw Konik (Poland)

Rapporteur: Dr. Niall Holohan (Ireland)

D. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

12. At its organizational meeting, the Committee adopted, without objection, the following agenda and programme of work: 3/

1. Opening of the session.
2. Appointment of new members.
3. Election of officers.
4. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
5. General debate and consideration of substantive questions:
   (a) Promotion of the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information;

(b) Continuation of the examination of United Nations public information policies and activities in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;

(c) Evaluation and follow-up of the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications.

6. Preparation and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

7. Other matters.

13. The fifteenth session of the Committee on Information continued with its substantive meetings at United Nations Headquarters from 11 to __ May 1993. For consideration of item 5 of the agenda, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on ways and means of furthering the development of communication infrastructures in developing countries, which was requested by the General Assembly in paragraph 5 of resolution 46/73 B of 11 December 1991 and in paragraph 17 of resolution 47/73 B of 14 December 1992; 4/

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on implementation of a system-wide information programme for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED); submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 19 of resolution 47/73 B; 5/

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on publications policy of the United Nations, submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 4 of resolution 47/73 B; 6/

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on continuous and major publications of the Department of Public Information; submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 2 (e) of resolution 47/73 B; 7/

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations information centres in 1992: allocation of resources; submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 8 of resolution 47/73 B; 8/

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on integration of United Nations information centres with other United Nations offices, while maintaining the functional autonomy of the United Nations information centres; submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 6 of resolution 47/73 B; 9/

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC); submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 6 of resolution 46/73 B; 10/

(h) Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing, reactivation and establishment of United Nations information centres; submitted pursuant to the decision taken by the Bureau of the Committee at its meeting held on 10 February 1993. 11/

E. Observers

14. The following Member States took part in the session as observers: Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Central African Republic, Croatia, Czech Republic, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Israel, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malawi, Panama, Suriname, Sweden and Zambia. The representatives of the Holy See and Switzerland also participated as observers.

15. Representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) also attended.

16. In addition, representatives of the International Organization of Journalists and the United Nations Correspondents' Association (UNCA) also participated as observers.

F. Other matters

17. The Committee on Information decided to conduct further informal consultations through the Bureau, the spokespersons of the regional groups, the Group of 77 and China.

18. The Chairman informed the Committee that Gabon had requested to become a member of the Committee. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the enlargement of its membership from 81 to 82 members and to submit the candidacy of Gabon to the General Assembly for approval (see draft decision in para. ____ below).

III. GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

19. Statements during the general debate were made by the following States members of the Committee: Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark (on behalf of the European Community), Ecuador, Finland (on behalf of the Western European and Other States Group), Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kenya, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia (on behalf of the Member States of the Arab Maghreb), Ukraine, Yemen and Zimbabwe. Statements were also made by the observers of the Czech Republic, Gabon and Israel. At the Committee's invitation, the representatives of UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNCA, and the International Organization of Journalists made statements.

20. In addressing the substantive questions before the Committee, all speakers alluded to the enhanced role of the United Nations in international affairs resulting from the end of the cold war. The world was looking to the United Nations for solutions to its problems, and all agreed that prompt, effective information on what the United Nations could and could not do must be provided. What was needed was a new and effective communications strategy emanating from the Organization.

21. It was vital that information was widely and rapidly disseminated to all the peoples of the world, in the spirit of "we the peoples", as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. Speakers believed that the United Nations could succeed only in a climate of well-informed public opinion, therefore public information activities must be expanded and more accurately targeted. As one delegation put it, the task was to "train" public opinion. According to many speakers, information about the United Nations was particularly needed in the developing world.

22. All delegations agreed that imagination and new ideas in the field of information were necessary to foster global awareness of the international challenges ahead and pave the way to solutions. Many speakers commented on the high profile of the United Nations in peace-keeping but believed, in the words of one delegation, that it was necessary to move beyond the drama of conflict, to hope.

23. All speakers stressed the importance of maintaining the consensus in the work of the Committee, as well as the need for its strengthening, so that new and important information work could be done in order to meet the rising expectations. One delegation, on behalf of a number of others, said that consensus was not an end in itself, but a springboard to improving the work of the Department of Public Information.

24. All delegations referred to the information revolution sweeping the world. As the power and reach of information was growing, so too they believed, was the desire of all nations to have access to this information flow in a free and balanced way. Many speakers expressed support for the new world information and communications order. They believed that priority must be given to the needs of the developing countries by the strengthening of their communication infrastructures to help redress the existing imbalance in information flows. They emphasized the essential relationship between communication and development. Many speakers felt that, without access to the communication process, new democracies and developing countries would not be able to voice their aspirations and opinions.

25. All delegations commended the work of UNESCO and its International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC), which is intended to meet the rapidly growing needs of the developing countries, especially those countries where the democratization process is accompanied by the emergence of independent and pluralistic media. They supported the cooperation between the Department of Public Information and UNESCO in such important initiatives as the seminars of Windhoek and Alma Alta dedicated to promoting an independent and pluralistic press in their respective regions. Many looked forward to the upcoming seminar in Santiago, scheduled for 1994, whose theme would be the role of the rural

press in the service of environment and development. One delegation said that it would be interested in hosting a similar seminar for the Middle East region.

26. Many speakers said that freedom of the press was inseparable from the basic universal freedoms of information and expression. They spoke out against the harassment of journalists around the world. One delegation, on behalf of a number of others, paid tribute to 60 journalists who had died in the past year in the performance of their duty. One speaker, representing the International Organization of Journalists, said that journalism was an increasingly perilous profession and, in this context, the Director-General of UNESCO had made an important statement on International Press Freedom Day.

27. A number of delegations said that the transfer of technology to developing countries and countries in transition must be implemented. Several delegations expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of response from the developed countries for funds for development of communications. They believed that the United Nations must help in this regard, although one speaker said that there was a lack of knowledge of possibilities for such assistance from within the United Nations system. The Department's training programme for broadcasters and journalists was mentioned as an important effort in this regard. One speaker also referred to the disparities that existed between countries within the developing world.

28. One delegation spoke out against the violation of its sovereignty committed in the name of free flow of information and alleged that the Charter of the United Nations and other international instruments had been violated by the continuation of certain broadcasts aimed at his country. Another delegation in exercise of right of reply, said that his country wanted to move beyond past rhetoric to important issues, such as strengthening public information programmes and outreach efforts.

29. In addressing the Committee, the Director of the Communication Division of UNESCO said that the situation of independent media in most new democracies was precarious, due to: disastrous finances; lack of professional experience; out-of-date equipment; taxes; shortage of newsprint; and new legislation not conducive to democratic principles and press freedom. There was a great risk of seeing new democracies drift back to authoritarian ways. Communication, participation and development were part of a continuum. IPDC had been created to help those countries with little or no access to the communications process.

30. In addressing the subject of the public information policies and activities of the United Nations, all speakers congratulated the new Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Public Information on his appointment and expressed their appreciation to him for his thought-provoking and comprehensive overview of the new structure of the Department and the progressive goals he hoped to achieve.

31. Many delegations expressed their full support for the emerging new spirit and direction of the Department, particularly with regard to the emphasis on "outreach" and "advocacy". They suggested that the policy of the new Assistant Secretary-General could be of vital importance in giving a more productive and innovative role to the Department of Public Information. One delegation said, however, that the demoting of the head of the Department to the level of an

Assistant Secretary-General was deplorable, particularly at the present time when the workload of the Department was increasing.

32. The Department's policy of communications needed not just to inform, but to move, according to one delegation. All agreed that the Department must seek more effective channels to reach public opinion. One delegation believed that special strategies on a sector by sector basis should be developed, and that the Department of Public Information should use the "multiplier" effect to send the United Nations message through every means at its disposal. A number of speakers believed that the Department must be more specific in targeting of its audiences. One delegation believed the Department could and should identify emerging topics on the world's agenda. Also, the Department must make full use of new technologies, it was agreed.

33. As to the composition of staff in the Department, a number of speakers discussed the importance of equitable geographic distribution. Black and francophone Africa needed more representation, in the opinion of some speakers. One delegation said that French-speaking African women were ignored in the Department. Other linguistic groups existed and deserved to be represented, in the way that the English-speaking group was, it was stated. The fair distribution of posts was necessary, both geographically and linguistically, according to some delegations.

34. One delegation commented that, in its view, staff members in the Department of Public Information should be rotated and also that people should not stay in the field too long. A review of career development was needed for the Dag Hammarskjöld Library as well, the speaker said.

35. A number of speakers stressed that the Department of Public Information needed to continually prioritize its information activities and to dispense with outdated mandates. In the opinion of many delegations, senior staff should have the budgetary flexibility to move resources as needed to emerging areas of importance.

36. Many speakers emphasized the importance of inter-agency cooperation, as a means for the Organization to truly speak with one voice, guarantee the most comprehensive coverage of its activities and maximize increasingly scarce resources. In that context, support was expressed for the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) and the Department's leadership role in that Committee. UNFPA said that cooperation in the United Nations system to promote awareness of the social, economic and environmental implications of population issues was particularly vital. Several speakers observed that peoples' participation in development could be strengthened by inter-agency cooperation. One delegation said that it would appreciate the assistance by the Department in bringing the United Nations to its schools, through a model United Nations programme.

37. On the subject of the Department's coverage of activities mandated by the General Assembly, delegations expressed support for the Department's important work over the past year. The many activities relating to the important issues of peace-keeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy were noted and vigorously supported by all speakers. Several commented on the particular usefulness of the poster on peace-keeping and hoped that it could be distributed to

schoolchildren world wide in all languages of the Organization. A number of speakers noted the importance of an information component in the planning for any peace-keeping operations in order to help guarantee their success. Several speakers said that providing precise information on the nature and objectives of peace-keeping operations was vital, as a means of promoting realistic expectations from the United Nations activities.

38. A number of speakers noted that the important high profile role of the United Nations in peace-keeping throughout the world today could possibly obscure the importance of the Organization's activities. The Director of the Division of Public Affairs of UNDP said that development goals were being curtailed due to civil wars, economic recession and other circumstances. AIDS programmes and refugee programmes were being adversely affected, for example. In his words, that amounted to a "serious slippage in the development agenda of our planet".

39. Many speakers said that it was critically important that the Department disseminate more information on United Nations activities in the field of development. Several speakers said that peace and development were a continuum, and that "agenda for peace" must be followed by an "agenda for development".

40. Many speakers underscored the importance they attached to the upcoming World Social Summit, to be held in 1995, and said that they expected that the Department of Public Information would focus its activities on this important event. One speaker characterized it as a "summit of people". Also, many said that they viewed the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995, as a good opportunity to reflect on the United Nations' achievements and its strategic plans for the next century.

41. Regarding the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), many speakers praised the Department for its excellent work in promoting and servicing the event, and hoped a similar approach to other important upcoming conferences would be forthcoming. Several speakers noted the success of JUNIC cooperation on this ground-breaking Conference. One speaker noted also that links with the private sector had been forged in information activities for UNCED, which was a valuable initiative.

42. Many delegations spoke of the importance they attached to the 1994 Population Conference, the 1995 Women's Conference and the Human Rights Conference, to be held in June 1993, as well as to the Year of the Family, to be observed in 1994. Another delegation noted the need to also develop an information programme for Habitat II, to be held in Istanbul in 1996. Two delegations also requested a system-wide information programme on Chernobyl, to observe the tenth anniversary of this catastrophe and call attention to its long-lasting, dangerous aftermath.

43. Several delegations supported and commended the Department's work on Palestine and South Africa. One delegation expressed the view that information on South Africa should continue until the democratic process in that country was complete. Another supported the Department's work on decolonization issues.

44. Commenting on the two reports on publications and publications policy before the Committee, a number of speakers emphasized the fundamental importance

of publications in the Department's information programme and believed they should be a major focus of deliberations in the Committee on Information. Several speakers suggested reducing expenditures by a better utilization of in-house printing and translation facilities. Many speakers said that they believed it important to put publications, where appropriate, on a cost-effective, more commercial footing and allow the market to determine their worth. In addition, that was a means of increasing the Department's resources. In that connection, one delegation proposed the establishment of a subcommittee to explore and recommend how best to commercialize selected publications.

45. Several speakers said that, while in theory this was a good principle, it could lead to the people in developing countries, who most needed the publications, being deprived of them. One speaker believed all United Nations periodicals should be offered free of charge world wide.

46. A number of speakers commented favourably on the Department's publications, such as the UN Chronicle, Yearbook of the United Nations, Africa Recovery and Development Forum. In the case of the latter publication, several delegations believed that its suspension could contribute to the marginalization of economic and social issues. One delegation said that the Chinese edition of the Chronicle was very well received. However, several delegations believed that the publications did not adequately reach the developing world. More were needed, they believed, and in other languages, especially French. One delegation requested booklets in Bangla to inform its people about United Nations peace-keeping activities. One delegation cautioned the Cartographic Unit of the Department to be more accurate.

47. In noting the integration of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library into the Department of Public Information, many speakers welcomed the idea of transforming it into a dynamic forum for intellectual and cultural exchange and an instrument of international contact. However, one delegation noted the necessity of following-up with realistic means of implementation, taking into account financial realities.

48. The importance of radio in the Department's information programme efforts was emphasized by many speakers. They saw it as a direct and practical means to impact on people in developing countries, thereby enabling the Department of Public Information to effectively reach all corners of the globe. One speaker said that it was particularly important in the Asia-Pacific region, which was the most populous. A speaker asked for inclusion of the Nepali language in the Department's radio programming, while another delegation expressed interest in the Japanese radio programmes being revived.

49. One delegation commended the Department's African radio services, but said there was an urgent need on the part of African radio stations for even more information. One speaker said that radio was important in peace-keeping missions, such as those undertaken in Namibia and Cambodia.

50. Several delegations mentioned their interest in the possibility of the United Nations having its own short-wave radio station. For budgetary reasons, one speaker believed alternative means should be found through the channels of national, international or other established stations. In that context, the use of the broadcasting facilities of the University for Peace were also mentioned.

51. The value of the daily press releases provided by the Department were remarked on by many delegations who found them invaluable in keeping the media and delegations well-briefed. They were particularly important to the smaller permanent missions, it was pointed out. Many speakers urged their continuation. One speaker asked that every effort be made to ensure equal coverage of meetings press releases in English and French.

52. The President of the United Nations Correspondents' Association said that he believed that the renovation of the press area was undertaken with too little consultation with his organization. An ongoing dialogue on that subject was needed, as professional news coverage was vital to explaining the United Nations activities to the world. In addition, he thought that the designation of a Security Council spokesman would facilitate coverage of this important area. That idea was also supported by one delegation. Also, better access to documents was needed, such as in the case of reports of the Secretary-General and of the Security Council. A number of speakers echoed the belief that the Department's facilities for media including accreditation and documentation areas remained inadequate. Two speakers suggested forming a small task force to see how this situation could be redressed.

53. The Office of the Spokesman of the Secretary-General was thanked for its daily press briefings by several delegations. Many speakers acknowledged the increasing pressures on that office and its important role in promoting understanding between the Secretary-General and Member States. On the subject of briefings, one delegation suggested that the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information give monthly briefings to Member States on important developments in the United Nations system.

54. With regard to the issues contained in the three reports on the United Nations information centres before the Committee, all delegations underscored the increasing importance of these centres, which they believed had a key role to play in the Department's new outreach and advocacy strategy. At the same time, speakers in the debate were aware of the need to improve productivity based on a more rational and efficient use of limited resources. Many delegations saw the integrated offices as the best means to that important end. Many others saw a better balanced reallocation of existing resources among the centres in developed and developing countries as the most pressing issue.

55. Many speakers supporting the integration of the United Nations information centres with field offices of UNDP and other United Nations offices said that they believed that positive results had been achieved, and functional autonomy preserved. One delegation, in supporting integration, said that the process should not be restricted to the 18 centres which had already been integrated, nor should it take place without appropriate legislation. In his opinion, it also should be extended to the centres in developed countries.

56. Other speakers supported the idea of a "unified" image of the United Nations in the field in principle, but took issue with some aspects of the implementation process. One delegation said that the number of staff in integrated centres needed to be increased and that the recruitment of local staff and the creation of national information officers were important. Another said that his country was opposed to the idea of delegating administrative powers and authority in the integrated centres to UNDP Resident Representatives.

57. A number of delegations believed that integration should not proceed further until it was discussed in depth in the Committee. Those speakers stated that they believed that the criteria and goals for integration needed to be defined.

58. Many speakers felt that the geographic location of centres should meet the needs of both the United Nations and Member States. They believed that the centres were an important source of information in the developing countries and countries in transition, particularly.

59. As to allocation of funds, it was a matter of maintaining centres where they could have the most impact, according to a number of speakers. Some delegations pointed out that the interests of both developed and developing countries would be better served by a streamlining of the United Nations information centres system, with a view to making it more efficient and productive. Others said, however, too much was being paid for premises in developed countries where knowledge about the United Nations was already widespread. It was a paradox that the rich countries absorbed most of the centres' budget, whereas the countries with limited means had to make additional contributions, some said. One delegation suggested that the high-cost centres be scaled down and any savings redeployed for new centres and the strengthening of the existing ones in developing countries.

60. One delegation suggested the establishment of a network of small centres under the supervision of a large existing regional one, in order to deliver the maximum amount of information to the widest possible audience.

61. A number of countries felt that the policy of integration had resulted in eliminating some posts of centre Director, as well as of some centres. One speaker suggested that the Joint Inspection Unit should have been consulted, as the creation of centres had been a General Assembly decision.

62. Several speakers indicated that they felt that Africa was bearing the brunt of these new measures, while receiving no consultation or clear explanations along the way. Centres in Bujumbura and in Brazzaville were anomalies, because they had free premises, but no Directors, according to one speaker. In Dakar, where the centre covered a region, the centre Director did not even have the resources to travel to the countries under his jurisdiction, it was pointed out.

63. Several speakers indicated that they believed that integration was not the proper response in Africa and, indeed, in the rest of the developing world. At a time when the United Nations needed a strengthened information campaign and when the winds of freedom were so strong, it seemed a paradox, in the words of one speaker, to be cutting back in those important regions.

64. Several delegations insisted that all provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/73 B be implemented, including, inter alia, the mandated establishment of the centre in Sana'a, and the enhancement of centres in Dar es Salaam, Dhaka, Tehran and Bujumbura. Several questioned why the post in Ouagadougou had not been filled. One speaker called for the opening of a new centre in Gabon. Another reiterated the interest of his delegation in establishing an information component within the UNDP office in Sofia.

65. One delegation offered premises, equipment and salary for a small centre in Bratislava. Another said that he hoped for the early opening of the centre in Conakry.

66. Many delegations said that they looked forward to a report to be presented at the next session of the Committee on Information session on the 18 centres which had already been integrated with field offices of UNDP. Specifically, one delegation asked for details on the accountability of managers and the sharing of resources in the integrated centres. Another asked for a report on the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the centres' functioning during the ongoing trial period. One speaker asked that the report include observations and recommendations made by local users of the various centres.

67. In regard to the effective procedures and policy of the centres in general, several delegations said that the centres must play a greater feedback role to help the United Nations in its efforts towards preventive diplomacy. Another speaker felt that that was not an appropriate role for the centres to play, as they had enough responsibilities to shoulder already. One speaker noted the cooperation between the University for Peace and the Department. Greater attempts to involve academic circles, the mass media and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the field were necessary, according to some delegations. One speaker suggested convening more regional NGO events with the help of the centres, such as perhaps a meeting for NGOs of the Russian Federation.

68. As to the interim offices established in some republics of the former Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, many speakers said that they believed them to be an important step towards integration of United Nations activities in the fields of technical cooperation and information, and were thus useful institutions. For example, one speaker said that the office in Kiev had yielded positive results. On the other hand, several speakers expressed reservations on the interim offices, believing that an intergovernmental mandate was necessary to establish them and that a fait accompli should not be accepted.

69. The relationship between the Committee and the Department was discussed by a number of speakers. Many delegations were of the opinion that the Committee on Information should define priorities and set broad policy guidelines, not micro-manage the Department. The Department should, in turn, provide its own new ideas, since the exchange of information between the Department and the Committee was vital. It was agreed that members of the Committee should be better informed about the Department's activities in general, and that those should become more transparent.

70. Several delegations indicated their belief that the Committee on Information must strive to tackle new areas of interest in its resolutions, in order to keep the Department's priorities current and focused. One delegation commented on the repetitive pattern of past resolutions and believed that the Committee on Information should find new common ground in order to enhance the work of the Department of Public Information.

71. At the close of the debate, the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information provided additional information on the work of the Department as well as on the new challenges before it, and responded to specific questions and comments posed by the delegations. He was appreciative of the many expressions

of support for the activities of the Department and its staff, and noted that all observations would serve as inspiration for advocating and communicating more effectively the message of the United Nations to its audiences world wide.

72. Referring to the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development, the Assistant Secretary-General emphasized the need to design thematically integrated information programmes with people in mind, to mobilize public opinion everywhere, and to foster a more effective exchange of information about the common goals that bind the North and the South in order to ensure that all of the world's people consider as their own the concerns and challenges facing the international community.

73. He referred to the Secretary-General's vision of peace, democratization and development as a continuum requiring cooperation and interaction within the United Nations family. The world organization must continue to give a voice to the wave of democratization and to the demand for development sweeping the globe. The Assistant Secretary-General, referring to information support by the Organization in electoral processes and people's participation in societal affairs, said that the United Nations and its family of agencies must respond together to these legitimate expectations.

74. With regard to the question of integration of United Nations information centres with other field offices, the Assistant Secretary-General explained that the criteria for this process reflected practical concerns, and the need for a unified United Nations team that "speaks with one voice". The integrated information centres would continue to be directly responsible to the Department of Public Information in the performance of their public information functions and would fully maintain their functional autonomy.

75. The geographical location of information centres and allocation of regular budgetary resources to finance their operations were deserving urgent and imaginative attention of the Committee. The Assistant Secretary-General pointed out that solutions for the inequities in this regard would require guidance from the Committee on Information. With regard to the establishment of new information centres and components requested by a number of delegations, as well as the enhancement and reactivation of existing centres, such as the ones in Bujumbura, Dar es Salaam, Dhaka and Tehran, the essential prerequisite must be the full approval and provision by the General Assembly of the additional staffing and financial resources needed.

76. The Assistant Secretary-General said that the Department, within its present resources, produced on a weekly basis radio programmes in 19 languages for distribution to more than 1,700 broadcasting organizations in all regions of the world. He shared the assessment of delegations that radio remained the most important means of communication, especially for developing countries and thanked the delegations for the cooperation of broadcasting organizations located in their respective countries which provided transmitter facilities for the Department's radio programmes. The Department was continuing its contacts with other broadcasting organizations to widen the dissemination of its programmes.

77. As the need to expand radio services would become more important in light of the approaching of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the

Assistant Secretary-General welcomed the proposal of some delegations to pursue further the possibility of a broadcasting capability owned and operated by the United Nations.

78. In the field of development and promotion of pluralistic media, the Department would continue its efforts jointly undertaken with UNESCO and other institutions, particularly UNDP, to hold seminars on this issue in Latin America in 1994 and in the Arab region in 1995.

79. Regarding United Nations peace-keeping operations and the related information activities, the Assistant Secretary-General stressed the importance of timely and "easy-to-understand" information material. The Department would continue to work with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations on basic information requirements for such operations.

80. Responding to questions on the sale of United Nations publications and information materials, the Assistant Secretary-General explained that the publishing activities of the United Nations were an international public service aimed at ensuring that valuable information could be used by all regardless of their purchasing power, as well as advocating United Nations issues that were not always of immediate interest to the general public. In the United Nations, the aim of sales was to increase distribution of publications without additional costs, and to recover some of the production costs.

81. The Assistant Secretary-General noted the delegations' support and appreciation for several publications of the Department, particularly Africa Recovery. In response to the expressed support for Development Forum, which, for financial reasons, was terminated on 31 December 1992, the Assistant Secretary-General assured the Committee that the Department remained committed to the idea of a regular publication on development issues, and would explore ways and means to fill this vacuum.

82. The Assistant Secretary-General thanked delegations for their expressions of support on proposals to open the Dag Hammarskjöld Library to the public, and have it function as a cultural centre. With regard to the present outreach activities provided by the Library, he pointed out its services to the public through 330 depository libraries in 130 Member States; its training programmes in the management and use of United Nations documentation to information centres, depository libraries and reference libraries within and beyond the United Nations; the orientation programmes for representatives and experts of Member States, educational institutions, NGOs and news media accredited to the United Nations; and the growing use of the Library's on-line databases.

83. In view of the various expressions of interest and concern regarding the services provided to the media at Headquarters, the Assistant Secretary-General referred to efforts made over the past months by the Department to find solutions to this protracted problem. He welcomed proposals for the creation of a small task force to look into how the present shortcomings could be redressed within existing resources. The Department of Public Information would continue to consult with United Nations Correspondents' Association and the concerned office in the Secretariat in an effort to resolve these problems.

84. The Assistant Secretary-General reiterated his suggestion to work, on a continuing basis, together with the Committee to solve the problems of the Department. He hoped that the recommendations of the Committee would take this offer into account.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/35/21), annex, sect. V.

2/ Ibid., Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/36/21); ibid., Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/37/21 and Corr.1); ibid., Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/38/21 and Corr.1 and 2); ibid., Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/39/21); ibid., Fortieth Session, Supplement No.21 (A/40/21); ibid., Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/41/21); ibid., Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/42/21); ibid., Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/43/21); ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/44/21); ibid., Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/45/21); ibid., Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/46/21).

3/ A/AC.198/1993/1.

4/ A/AC.198/1993/2.

5/ A/AC.198/1993/3.

6/ A/AC.198/1993/4.

7/ A/AC.198/1993/5.

8/ A/AC.198/1993/6.

9/ A/AC.198/1993/7.

10/ A/AC.198/1993/8.

11/ A/AC.198/1993/9.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.198/1993/L.2
26 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
Fifteenth session
10-28 May 1993

PREPARATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

At its ___ meeting, on _____, the Committee decided by consensus to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution A

Information in service of humanity

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the comprehensive and important report of the Committee on Information,

Also taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information,

Urges that all countries, organizations of the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and the consequences of every kind arising from those disparities that affect the capability of the public, private or other media and individuals in developing countries to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production, as well as to ensure the diversity of sources and their free access to information, recognizing the call in this context for what in the United Nations and at various international

forums has been termed "a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process", should:

(a) Cooperate and interact with a view to reducing existing disparities in information flows at all levels by increasing assistance for the development of communication infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with due regard for their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by those countries, and in order to enable them and the public, private or other media in developing countries to develop their own information and communication policies freely and independently and increase the participation of media and individuals in the communication process, and to ensure a free flow of information at all levels;

(b) Ensure for journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and condemn resolutely all attacks against them;

(c) Provide support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from public, private and other media in developing countries;

(d) Enhance regional efforts and cooperation among developing countries, as well as cooperation between developed and developing countries, to strengthen communication capacities and to improve the media infrastructure and communication technology in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information;

(e) Aim, in addition to bilateral cooperation, at providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries and their media, public, private or other, with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including:

(i) The development of the human and technical resources that are indispensable for the improvement of information and communication systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(ii) The creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media, public, private or other, to have, by using their national and regional resources, the communication technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(iii) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at the subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries;

(iv) The facilitation, as appropriate, of access by the developing countries to advanced communication technology available on the open market;

(f) Provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which should support both public and private media.

Draft resolution B

United Nations public information policies and activities

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the primary role of the General Assembly in elaborating, coordinating and harmonizing United Nations policies and activities in the field of information,

Also reaffirming that the Secretary-General should ensure that the activities of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, as the focal point of the public information tasks of the United Nations, are strengthened and improved, keeping in view the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the priority areas defined by the General Assembly and the recommendations of the Committee on Information,

Taking note of all reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the fifteenth session of the Committee on Information,

1. Decides to consolidate the role of the Committee on Information as its main subsidiary body mandated to make recommendations relating to the work of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat;

2. Calls upon the Secretary-General, in respect of the United Nations public information policies and activities, to implement the following recommendations in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions and in this regard to ensure that the Department of Public Information:

(a) Continues to disseminate information about the activities of the United Nations in coordination with the information services of other relevant agencies in accordance with the United Nations medium-term plan, the programme budget and their relevant revisions, pertaining, inter alia, to:

(i) International peace and security;

(ii) Disarmament;

(iii) Peace-keeping operations and peacemaking;

(iv) Decolonization and the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the light of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism;

(v) The promotion and protection of human rights and in that context the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights;

(vi) The elimination of all forms of racial discrimination;

(vii) The advancement of status of women and their role in society;

(viii) The promotion of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(ix) Problems of economic and social development, as well as international economic cooperation aimed at resolving external debt problems;

(x) The least developed countries;

(xi) The environment and development;

(xii) The elimination of foreign occupation;

(xiii) The campaign against terrorism in all its forms in line with General Assembly resolution 40/61 of 9 December 1985;

(xiv) International efforts against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking;

(xv) Crime prevention and criminal justice;

(xvi) Support for the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and for the tremendous efforts of the African countries aimed at recovery and development, as well as the positive response by the international community to alleviate the serious economic situation prevailing in Africa;

(xvii) International efforts towards the total eradication of apartheid and support for the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa and, where necessary, the role of the United Nations in this context;

(xviii) United Nations activities pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine in particular, also including current developments in that region and the ongoing peace process;

(b) Provides the necessary level of information support for the activities of the United Nations in situations requiring immediate and special response;

(c) Continues its efforts at promoting an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations system among the peoples of the world and at strengthening the positive image of the system as a whole;

(d) Continues its briefings, assistance and orientation programmes for broadcasters, journalists and other media professionals from developing countries focused on United Nations related issues;

(e) Provides, on the basis of its activities, information to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization about new forms of cooperation, at the regional and subregional levels, for the training of media professionals and for the improvement of the information and communication infrastructures of developing countries;

(f) Continues its policies of cooperation with all agencies of the United Nations system, in particular with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

(g) Continues its policies of cooperation with the news agencies in and of the developing countries, in particular the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries;

3. Welcomes the decision by the Department of Public Information to establish a Task Force to look into the allocation of office space to the media at United Nations Headquarters;

4. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/AC.198/1993/5 regarding the continuous and major publications of the Department of Public Information and urges all efforts to ensure timely production and dissemination of its major publications, in particular the UN Chronicle, the Yearbook of the United Nations and Africa Recovery, maintaining consistent editorial independence and accuracy, taking necessary measures to ensure that its output contains adequate, objective and equitable information about issues before the Organization, reflecting divergent opinions wherever they occur;

5. Expresses regret at the circumstances leading to the closing down of Development Forum, and encourages the Secretary-General to suggest ways and means to revive Development Forum, which has continued to receive a mandate of the General Assembly, and report thereon to the Committee on Information;

6. Requests the management of the Department of Public Information to review the Department's publications and proposals for publications to ensure that all publications fulfil an identifiable need, that they do not duplicate other publications inside or outside the United Nations system, and that they are produced in a cost-effective manner, and report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth substantive session;

7. Reaffirms the importance attached by Member States to the role of United Nations information centres in effectively and comprehensively disseminating information about United Nations activities and the optimization of the resources allocated to the Department of Public Information;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the sixteenth session of the Committee on Information, for the purpose of evaluating the need for any subsequent integration, the results of the current trial of integrating 18 United Nations information centres with field offices of the United Nations Development Programme as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report A/AC.198/1993/7. The report should also contain the views of the host countries, bearing in mind the concerns of Member States that the integration of the United Nations information centres with the United Nations offices could adversely affect their functions in the developing countries;

9. Reaffirms the role of the General Assembly in relation to the opening of new United Nations information centres and invites the Secretary-General, as well, to make such recommendations as he may judge necessary regarding the establishment and location of new United Nations information centres;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that his proposals relating to the structure, functions and activities of the seven United Nations interim offices in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan fully comply with the mandates of the relevant General Assembly resolutions pertaining to operational activities and dissemination of information, taking into account the observations and recommendations of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/47/7/Add.16), the decision taken by the General Assembly (47/469) and relevant General Assembly resolutions, especially resolution 47/199;

11. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/AC.198/1993/6 regarding the allocation of resources to the United Nations information centres in 1992 and would appreciate information on the status of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, as well as detailed break-down of resource deployment between centres and, while welcoming the action by some Governments with regard to the financial and material support for United Nations information centres in their respective capitals, calls upon the Secretary-General to study ways and means to rationalize and effect equitable disbursement of available resources to all United Nations information centres and report thereon to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth substantive session;

12. Notes the substantial contribution by the Government of Poland and requests the Secretary-General to continue to consult with the Polish authorities, with a view to finalizing arrangements for a United Nations information component in Warsaw;

13. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/AC.198/1993/9 regarding the enhancing, reactivation and establishment of United Nations information centres and again calls upon the Secretary-General to implement fully and expeditiously the recommendation contained in paragraph 10 of resolution 47/73 B regarding:

(a) The establishment of a United Nations information centre in Sana'a;

(b) The reactivation of the United Nations information centre in Tehran;

(c) The enhancement of the information centres in Bujumbura, Dar es Salaam and Dhaka, and submit the implementation report to the sixteenth substantive session of the Committee on Information;

14. Further calls on the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the aforementioned recommendation to the sixteenth session of the Committee on Information;

15. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/AC.198/1993/9 and encourages continued enhanced cooperation between the Department of Public Information and the University for Peace in Costa Rica as a focal point for promoting United Nations activities and disseminating United Nations information materials;

16. Takes note of the requests by Bulgaria, Gabon, Haiti and Slovakia for information components;

17. Expresses full support to the wide and prompt coverage of United Nations activities through a continuation of United Nations press releases;

18. Calls upon the Secretary-General to enhance the efficiency of regional radio units in the Department of Public Information;

19. Calls upon the Secretary-General to make every effort to create conditions more conducive to achieving parity by appropriate utilization of existing equipment in the press coverage of meetings in English and French;

20. Takes note of the recommendations and observations by Member States contained in the Secretary-General's report in document A/AC.198/1993/2 and invites Member States that wish to do so to submit their observations and suggestions to the Secretary-General by 1 January 1994, on ways and means of furthering the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with a view to consolidating recent experience in the field of international cooperation aimed at enabling them to develop their own information and communication capacities, freely and independently, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session;

21. In order to facilitate continued contact between the Department of Public Information and the Committee on Information between sessions, recommends that the Bureau of the Committee on Information, together with representatives of each regional group and China, in close contact with members of the Committee on Information, should meet, as required, and consult at periodic intervals with the Department of Public Information;

22. Supports decision 5 of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development, requesting the Secretary-General to develop and launch, on a priority basis, in cooperation with relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes, a specific programme of public information on the World Summit for Social Development's core issues as well as on its objectives;

23. Supports the decision of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994, requesting the Secretary-General to develop and launch, on a priority basis, a coordinated public information programme, in cooperation with competent United Nations bodies and specialized agencies;

24. Takes note of the request by Belarus and Ukraine to consider the development and implementation of a system-wide programme for the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster in 1996;

25. Also requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session in 1994 and to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session in 1994, on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present resolution;

26. Decides that the next session of the Committee on Information should last 12 working days and invites the Bureau of the Committee to explore ways and means of making optimum utilization of the Committee's time;

27. Requests the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session;

28. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-ninth session the item entitled "Questions relating to Information".

Draft decision

Increase in the membership of the Committee on Information

The General Assembly decides to increase the membership of the Committee on Information from 81 to 82 members and decides to appoint Gabon as a member of the Committee on Information.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.198/1993/L.3
26 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
Fifteenth session
10-28 May 1993

Programme budget implications of draft resolution B, entitled "United Nations public information policies and activities"

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Request contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22 of draft resolution B, entitled "United Nations public information policies and activities", contained in document A/AC.198/1993/L.2, the General Assembly would:

A. Call upon the Secretary-General, in respect of United Nations public information policies and activities, to implement the following recommendations, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, and in this regard to ensure that the Department of Public Information:

(a) Continues to disseminate information about the activities of the United Nations in coordination with the information services of other relevant agencies in accordance with the United Nations medium-term plan, the programme budget and their relevant revisions, pertaining, inter alia to:

(i) International peace and security;

(ii) Disarmament;

(iii) Peace-keeping operations and peace-making;

(iv) Decolonization and the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the light of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism;

(v) The promotion and protection of human rights and in that context the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights;

(vi) The elimination of all forms of racial discrimination;

(vii) The advancement of the status of women and their role in society;

(viii) The promotion of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(ix) Problems of economic and social development, as well as international economic cooperation aimed at resolving external debt problems;

(x) The least developed countries;

(xi) The environment and development;

(xii) The elimination of foreign occupation;

(xiii) The campaign against terrorism in all its forms in line with General Assembly resolution 40/61 of 9 December 1985;

(xiv) International efforts against drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking;

(xv) Crime prevention and criminal justice;

(xvi) Support for the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and for the tremendous efforts of the African countries aimed at recovery and development, as well as the positive response by the international community to alleviate the serious economic situation prevailing in Africa;

(xvii) International efforts towards the total eradication of apartheid and support for the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa and, where necessary, the role of the United Nations in this context;

(xviii) United Nations activities pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine, in particular, also including current developments in that region and the ongoing peace process;

(b) Provides the necessary level of information support for the activities of the United Nations in situations requiring immediate and special response;

(c) Continues its efforts at promoting an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations system among the peoples of the world and at strengthening the positive image of the system as a whole;

(d) Continues its briefings, assistance and orientation programmes for broadcasters, journalists and other media professionals from developing countries focused on United Nations-related issues;

(e) Provides, on the basis of its activities, information to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) about new forms of cooperation at the regional and subregional levels, for the training of media professionals and the improvement of the information and communication infrastructures of developing countries;

(f) Continues its policies of cooperation with all agencies of the United Nations system, and in particular with UNESCO;

(g) Continues its policies of cooperation with the news agencies in and of the developing countries, in particular the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries;

B. Urge all efforts to ensure timely production and dissemination of the Department of Public Information's major publications, in particular the UN Chronicle, the Yearbook of the United Nations and Africa Recovery, maintaining consistent editorial independence and accuracy, taking necessary measures to ensure that its output contains adequate, objective and equitable information about issues before the Organization, reflecting divergent opinions wherever they occur;

C. Encourage the Secretary-General to explore ways and means to revive the Development Forum, which has continued to receive a mandate of the General Assembly, and report thereon to the Committee on Information;

D. Request the management of the Department of Public Information to review the Department's publications and proposals for publication to ensure that all publications fulfil an identifiable need, that they do not duplicate other publications inside or outside the United Nations system, and that they are produced in a cost-effective manner, and report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session;

E. Request the Secretary-General to report to the sixteenth session of the Committee on Information, for the purpose of evaluating the need for any subsequent integration, the results of the current trial of integrating 18 United Nations information centres with field offices of the United Nations Development Programme as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report (A/AC.198/1993/7). The report should also contain the views of the host countries, bearing in mind the concerns of Member States that the integration of the United Nations information centres with the United Nations offices could adversely affect their functions in the developing countries;

F. Invite the Secretary-General to make such recommendations as he may judge necessary regarding the establishment and location of new United Nations information centres;

G. Request the Secretary-General to ensure that his proposals relating to the structure, functions and activities of the seven United Nations interim offices in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan fully comply with the mandates of the relevant General Assembly resolutions pertaining to operational activities and dissemination of information, taking into account the observations and recommendations of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/47/7/Add.16), decision 47/469 of 23 December 1992 taken by the General Assembly and relevant General Assembly resolutions, especially resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992;

H. Call upon the Secretary-General to study ways and means to rationalize and effect equitable disbursement of available resources to all United Nations

information centres and report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth substantive session;

I. Request the Secretary-General to continue to consult with the Polish authorities, with a view to finalizing arrangements for a United Nations information component in Warsaw;

J. Call upon the Secretary-General to implement fully and expeditiously the recommendation contained in paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 47/73 B of 14 December 1992 regarding

(a) The establishment of a United Nations information centre in Sana'a;

(b) The reactivation of the United Nations information centre in Tehran;

(c) The enhancement of the information centres in Bujumbura, Dar es Salaam and Dhaka;

and to submit a report on the implementation of the aforementioned recommendation to the sixteenth session of the Committee on Information;

K. Call upon the Secretary-General to enhance the efficiency of regional radio units in the Department of Public Information;

L. Call upon the Secretary-General to make every effort to create conditions more conducive to achieving parity by appropriate utilization of existing equipment in the press coverage of meetings in English and French;

M. Request the Secretary-General to submit to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session a report on observations and suggestions submitted by Member States on ways and means of furthering the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with a view to consolidating recent experience in the field of international cooperation aimed at enabling them to develop their own information and communications capacities, freely and independently;

N. Support the decision of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development requesting the Secretary-General to launch on a priority basis, in cooperation with relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes, a specific programme of public information on the World Summit for Social Development's core issues as well as on its objectives;

O. Support the decision of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994, requesting the Secretary-General to develop and launch, on a priority basis, in cooperation with competent United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, a coordinated public information programme on the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994.

B. Activities by which the request would be implemented

2. Should the draft resolution be adopted by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General would:

(a) Ensure that the Department of Public Information continues to disseminate information about the activities of the United Nations in coordination with the information services of other relevant agencies in accordance with the medium-term plan, the programme budget and their relevant revisions;

(b) Submit a report to the Committee on Information on his efforts to explore ways and means to revive Development Forum;

(c) Submit a report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session on the review of the Department's publications and proposals for publication;

(d) Submit a report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session on integration of United Nations information centres with other United Nations offices;

(e) Make such recommendations, as he may judge necessary, regarding the establishment and location of United Nations information centres;

(f) Submit a report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session on his study of ways and means to rationalize and effect equitable disbursement of available resources to all United Nations information centres;

(g) Continue consultations with the Polish authorities with the aim of finalizing arrangements for a United Nations information component in Warsaw;

(h) Submit a report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session on the full and expeditious implementation of paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 47/73 B;

(i) Continue implementation, on a phased basis, of provision in conference rooms at Headquarters of the necessary furniture and equipment with a view to achieving parity in the press coverage of meetings in English and French;

(j) Submit a report to the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session on observations and suggestions submitted by Member States on ways and means of furthering the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries;

(k) Launch, on a priority basis, in cooperation with relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes, a specific programme of public information on the World Summit for Social Development;

(l) Develop and launch, on a priority basis, in cooperation with competent United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, a coordinated public information programme on the International Conference on Population and Development.

C. Additional requirements at full cost

3. The requested activities listed in paragraphs 1.A and 1.J above reflect the approved programme of work under section 31 of the 1992-1993 programme budget, and no additional resources would be required for their implementation.

4. With regard to the requests contained in paragraphs 1.B and 1.K above, the Department of Public Information would continue its efforts to ensure timely production and editorial independence of its mandated publications, and to enhance the efficiency of its regional radio units. No additional appropriations would be required in this context.

5. As regards the request contained in paragraph 1.C above, the Department of Public Information will examine, together with any interested United Nations agencies and organizations in the context of JUNIC, any practical administrative and funding proposals that may permit the revival of Development Forum on an assured and continuing basis. The results of such review would be reported to the Committee on Information. No additional appropriation would be required for the production of this report.

6. It is not anticipated that any additional appropriations would be required for the production of the reports, studies and assessments called for or invited in paragraphs 1.D, 1.E, 1.F, and 1.H above, as they relate to the regular programme of activities of the Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit of the Department of Public Information.

7. With regard to the request contained in paragraph 1.L above, consistent with the information provided in paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/47/57 of 24 November 1992), phased installation of furniture and equipment in the conference rooms at Headquarters to ensure parity in the coverage of English and French from existing resources has commenced. As of late 1992, facilities for French coverage were installed in conference rooms 1 and 3. For 1993, the Department of Public Information is working with the Office of General Services on arrangements to install similar facilities in conference rooms 2, 4, and the ECOSOC and Trusteeship Council chambers. For the 1994-1995 biennium, the Department of Public Information and the Office of General Services anticipate the completion of installation of facilities for French coverage in all the remaining conference rooms.

8. The request contained in paragraph 1.I above, concerns the establishment of a United Nations information component in Warsaw. In this connection it is noted that the Polish Government has agreed in principle to provide rent-free premises as well as a financial contribution of 200 million Polish zlotys (equivalent to approximately US$ 12,700 at current rates) to partially offset initial operating resource requirements for the information component. However, discussions between representatives of the Polish Government and the Secretariat are continuing on a number of unresolved issues (including those referred to in paragraph 7 of the Secretary-General's note (A/AC.198/1993/9) on enhancing, reactivation and establishment of United Nations information centres). The Department of Public Information will continue to consult with the Polish authorities with a view to resolving all outstanding issues. At this stage, therefore, no additional appropriations would be required.

9. With regard to the request contained in paragraph 1.N above, the Department of Public Information is developing a specific programme of public information on the World Summit for Social Development, the resource requirements for which would be reflected in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

10. As regards the request contained in paragraph 1.O above, the United Nations Population Fund, in consultation with the Department of Public Information, has developed a public information programme on the International Conference on Population and Development. A related provision will be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

Summary

Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution B contained in document A/AC.198/1993/L.2, no additional appropriations would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.